

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Activities of Syrian Purchasing Commission, Italy

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1. Following is a list of names of members of the commission sent to Italy by the Syrian Government for the purpose of purchasing airplane material from Fiat at Mirafiori (Turin).

- a. Abd-al-Salam Sami - born in Damascus in 1907, resident of Damascus, a professor, carries passport #2423 issued on 29 November 1948;
- b. Vladimir Boris - born in Damascus on 18 August 1914, resident of Damas, an engineer, carries Syrian passport #2662 issued on 2 August 1948;
- c. Muhamed Zanchier - born in Damascus Halbeude, carries Syrian passport #2657 issued on 3 August 1948;
- d. Jean Paulos - born in Marmarita in 1918, resident of Marmarita, a businessman, carries passport #4505 issued on 5 November 1948;
- e. Fuad Hassan Murad - born in Marus in 1918, resident of Damascus, a student, carries passport #4596 issued on 30 November 1948;
- f. Yussef Adib Haddad - born in Ales in 1923, resident of Damascus, a businessman, carries passport #188 issued on 16 January 1949;
- g. Captain Zuhayr El Saba Wasfi - born in Damascus on 28 February 1919, resident of Damascus, a businessman, carries passport #271776 issued at Damascus on 3 August 1948; and

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- b. Fernand Roch - born at Brod on 3 June 1900, a Czech citizen and engineer, resident of Beirut, carries Czech passport #2023/48 issued at Beirut on 8 December 1948.
2. The following individuals act as intermediaries for the Commission in their negotiations with Italian firms:
- a. Rag. Mario Anselmi, 2 Via Numa Pompilio, Rome.
 - b. Ing. Francesco Bonavoglia, administrator of Savenar (Alfa Romeo export), Piazza Castello 2, Milan:
 - c. A certain Strominger (fnu); and
 - d. A financial group headed by one Sen. Orsini (sic) of Rome and Milan.
3. On 26 January 1949 two Fiat G-55 planes, purchased by the Syrian Government, left Genoa for Damascus. Upon their arrival a technical commission which inspected the planes was not satisfied that all the requirements specified in the contract had been met; it furthermore established that some of the material used was of a quality inferior to the specifications.
4. In this connection, on 20 February 1949 Ing. Roch telephoned from Milan to Fiat in Turin to protest on behalf of the Syrian Government, to request a discount on the fixed price and to cancel any other order previously placed. He did not reach the Fiat representative involved in the transaction and could not lodge his protest at that time. It is to be noted that Ing. Roch, besides acting as representative of the Syrian Government in Italy, is a member of the Czech Skoda works
5. If Roch succeeds in canceling the order placed with Fiat-Aeritalia, he has orders to negotiate for a similar order with the Macchi works. Representatives of the latter firm have already been given advance notice by Roch and a plan has been made to overcome bureaucratic difficulties as follows: Macchi will request a Ministry permit to build and export a certain number of "training planes", (thus avoiding the difficulties in obtaining Foreign Commerce Ministry Licenses and Air Force permission); actually it will build and send Macchi-205 fighters. General Ilari will be instrumental in this operation.
6. Another difficulty arises from the fact that, in providing the financing, the Arab Bank of Damascus, which acts on behalf of the Syrian Government, must specify in detail the kind of material for which the financing is intended. The Arabs fear that should they specify "training planes", this definition, although intended only for the consumption of Italian Government officials, might give the Macchi grounds to actually deliver training ships and not fighters. This difficulty will probably be overcome through the intervention of a financial group headed by Sen. Orsini, which will vouch for the deal and will advise the Arab Government to send a technician to witness the crating of the planes before their departure from Italy.

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7. Roch is also the intermediary through which the Inter verbo firm of one G. Naef, Lavaterstrasse 4, Zurich, on 22 February 1949, has offered for sale to the Syrian Government the material listed below. The Cemsa firm of Saronno is also interested in this affair. The material is reported to be old equipment of the Swiss Army.

a.	20 pieces demountable 75 mm. horse-drawn field artillery, complete with accessories and equipment, with sighting apparatus, all ready for field use	\$ 13,900.00
b.	30,000 steel projectiles, 75 mm. with time and impact fuses	27.70
c.	20,000 as above	27.70
d.	175,000 projectiles, 75 mm. with special fuses	31.50
e.	100 anti-aircraft machine guns, 7.5 mm. double barrel	3,595.00
f.	350 anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, 20 mm.	5,720.00
g.	1,000,000 20 mm. shells with time fuse	6.50
h.	300,000 anti-tank percussion shells, 20 mm.	6.50
i.	70,000 7.5 mm. automatic rifles mod. 89, with straps, covered barrels, and attachments for maintenance	23.00
j.	10,000,000 cartridges, 7.5 mm., also usable for mod. 96/11 per thousand	77.00
k.	1,000 heavy machine guns, 7.5 mm., 500 shots per minute	2,450.00
l.	5,000,000 cartridges, 7.5 mm. for above per thousand	77.00
m.	1,000 anti-tank guns, 24 mm.	5,711.00
n.	350,000 anti-tank percussion shells, 24 mm.	6.50
o.	10,000 Enfield rifles, 303, and 7,000,000 cartridges, 303, per rifle with 1,000 cartridges	155.00
p.	50,000 Swiss automatic rifles with straps, covered barrels 7.5 mm. mod. 96/11	40.00
q.	6,000 revolvers mod. 82/29, 7.5 mm. with belts and holsters	80.90
r.	5,000,000 cartridges for above per thousand	69.30

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The above prices are for merchandise tested, packed, f.o.b. Geneva.
Payment: opening of credit according to instructions to follow.
Origin of merchandise: Switzerland.

Total weight: about 700 tons

Add about 5% to above prices for mediation and expenses.

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